

E 386

.A22

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00005082262







AN ADDRESS

OF THE

DEMOCRATIC MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

FROM

THE STATE OF TENNESSEE

TO

THEIR CONSTITUENTS.

WASHINGTON :
BLAIR AND RIVES, PRINTERS.
1841.

CIRCULAR LETTER

OF

Aaron V. Brown, Cave Johnson, Hopkins L. Turney, Julius W. Blackwell, Abraham McClellan, and Harvey M. Watterson, to their constituents.

FELLOW-CITIZENS: Before this reaches you, the term of our service as your representatives in Congress will have expired. In laying down the high and responsible trust which was bestowed upon us with a generous confidence, we should not feel that we had discharged our whole duty if we failed to furnish you with the means of thoroughly scrutinizing the principles which have guided us. We were indebted to your zealous devotion to democratic republicanism for the distinguished honor we have enjoyed of representing you in the councils of the nation. Feeling conscious that the same devotion to democracy has actuated us in the discharge of our duties, which animated you in conferring the trust, our earnest wish now is to satisfy you that your confidence has not been abused.

ECONOMY IN THE PUBLIC EXPENDITURES.

At the head of republican virtues, we place a strict economy in the expenditure of the public money. A departure from this principle is necessarily followed by corruption, and oppressive taxation. Extravagance can be indulged and sustained only by high taxes, and is always accompanied by corruption. Our Government was designed to be plain, simple, and cheap in its administration: making the least possible exactions upon the people for its support, and leaving the free energies of honest industry as little trammelled as practicable. By this golden rule we are willing to be judged; and by it we shall, in turn, judge those who are soon to be in power in the Government.

In the late political struggle, in which the public was so deeply agitated, the subject of expenditures occupied a conspicuous place. The opponents of the then administration knew that the American people are justly sensitive on the subject of extravagant expenditures of the public money, and they spared no pains to fix upon that administration the sin of wastefulness in its management of the revenue. If the public mind had been in a less excited state, it would not have been forgotten that, during the whole time when so much extravagance was alleged to exist, the taxes were regularly and constantly diminishing by operation of law; and that no more money was exacted from the people than Congress deemed necessary for an economical administration of the Government. Now that the excitement has subsided, we can appeal, with confidence, to your dispassionate judgments for a calm investigation of this charge. Extravagance in the Government can take place in but one of two ways: the appropriations of money by Congress may be extravagant, because they are made for improper objects; or, the application of money appropriated may be extravagant, because those who direct its application may do it extrava-

gantly. For the *application* of appropriations, the Executive, or the subordinate officers under him, are alone responsible. In justification of the President, it is due to him that we state that the appropriations for the years complained of, greatly exceeded his annual estimates and recommendations. In 1838, his estimates amounted to \$22,735,249; but Congress, against his urgent advice, appropriated, by the laws which it passed, the sum of \$39,455,438. In 1839, he estimated the necessary expenditures at \$23,509,089; Congress appropriated \$37,614,936. For these appropriations over the estimates, Congress alone is responsible. The President could do no more than furnish the estimates, and *recommend* that they should not be exceeded; and it is remarkable that the very party who afterwards denounced the President for *his* extravagance, were themselves mostly to blame, for voting for and passing these large appropriations. We state the fact from the journals of Congress, that, of the \$75,822,601, (the amount of appropriations for 1838 and 1839,) the sum of \$65,700,873 was passed without a division, or a call for the ayes and noes. If none of that party was sufficiently opposed to that amount to call for the ayes and noes, it is with poor grace that they can come forward now and object to it. Of the remaining \$10,121,728, only \$2,382,318 were voted against by the Tennessee members opposed to the administration; leaving them justly chargeable with the sum of \$73,440,283, against which they cannot pretend to have been opposed—at least sufficiently opposed to induce them even to call for the ayes and noes. Of the large appropriations of those years, we do not doubt that there were many which ought not to have been passed by Congress. But we aver it from the records, that the opposition members, generally, voted more uniformly for large appropriations than the democratic members did. Even the “splendid furniture of the marble palace” (as it has been called) was voted for, so far as the journals show, by every member of that party which lately set up such high pretensions to economy.

Whilst we make this reference to the appropriations of the last Congress, in justification of the friends of the administration, we have no difficulty in submitting the appropriations of the present Congress to the severest scrutiny. When Mr. Van Buren assumed the duties of President, he found the expenditures of the Government run up, from various causes, to a very large amount. In his first, and in each subsequent message, his recommendations to Congress to curtail and retrench the expenditures were urgent and unceasing. In reference to his exertions on this subject, and their success, we invite you to read the following extract from his message of December, 1840:

“But, to change a system operating upon so large a surface, and applicable to such numerous and diversified interests and objects, was more than the work of a day. The attention of every department of the Government was immediately, and in good faith, directed to that end; and has been so continued to the present moment. The estimates and appropriations for the year 1838 (the first over which I had any control) were somewhat diminished. The expenditures of 1839 were reduced six millions of dollars. Those of 1840, exclusive of disbursements for public debt and trust claims, will probably not exceed twenty-two and a half millions; being between two and three millions less than those of the preceding year, and nine or ten millions less than those of 1837.”

We are thus able to show you a reduction, in the last two years, of nine or ten millions in the expenditures. Indeed, we believe we can safely assert that the expenditures for 1840, which did not exceed the

sum of \$22,489,349, have entirely escaped censure; and we are entirely certain that they will stand the most rigid test of economy. We are gratified that it has been our fortune to co-operate with the Chief Magistrate in the work of retrenchment which he commenced upon his entrance into office; and that we have succeeded so effectually, that none now pretend to deny that the expenditures are within reasonable limits. We sincerely trust that the party now coming into power may be able to acquit themselves with equal success. But in this hope we fear we shall be disappointed. The signs of the times indicate any thing else than rigid economy. The principles already avowed by their leaders in Congress are at war with economy. Low taxes alone can insure low expenditures; yet we see the party about to come into power preparing the way for higher taxes. If you have read the debates of the present session of Congress, you have been astonished to find that, instead of complaining that we have been appropriating too much money, the complaint now made is that we have appropriated too little. Instead, now, of being held up as wasteful spendthrifts, we are denounced as niggardly and parsimonious in our appropriations—as “sailing too close to the wind.”

TREASURY NOTES.

It was the fortune of Mr. Van Buren to assume the duties of President at a time when the excesses in banking, and the abuses of our bank credit system, had reached their utmost limit. A revulsion in the monetary affairs of the country was inevitable, and its occurrence was hastened by the execution of the deposit act of 1836, under which nearly twenty-eight millions of the public revenue were withdrawn from the channels of trade, in which it was invested by the deposit banks, and distributed amongst the States. Within about sixty days after Mr. Van Buren's inauguration, the explosion took place, and the banks suspended specie payments. The deposit banks shared the common fate, which made, to a great extent, unavailable the principal part of the public money then on hand. In this state of things, Mr. Van Buren convened Congress in September, 1837, to provide the means of enabling the Government to meet its debts. Its means were ample, but they were withheld by the suspended banks. A resort to a loan of money was inevitable; and the only question open was, as to the shape in which the money should be borrowed—whether by putting the bonds of the Government in market, and selling them for gold and silver; or, by executing her notes payable at a short date, and offering these to her creditors as the evidences of the existing debts, and subject to be redeemed in specie so soon as the suspended means of the Treasury should become available. The latter course was adopted as the most convenient, and as being least likely to terminate in a national debt. The continuance of many of the causes which rendered the measure necessary in the first place, has induced Congress, from session to session, to continue the policy. The policy of resorting to Treasury notes has no connexion, either directly or indirectly, with the independent treasury system. The former was a *temporary* expedient, rendered necessary by the urgent wants of the Government, and was provided for by a separate and distinct act of Congress, and must cease when the necessities of the Government cease; the latter was designed to dissolve forever the

connexion between the Treasury and the banks, and to become the *permanent* policy of the country.

A NATIONAL DEBT.

The final payment of our national debt was one of those important events which marked the administration of Andrew Jackson. In this respect, our Government enjoys a proud distinction. It stands alone, as the only Government, which, having fully and faithfully discharged all its obligations to its creditors, has also relieved itself entirely from debt. Opposition to a national debt we regard as an essential principle in a republican creed. The election of General Jackson, in 1828, saved the country from that curse of federalism. It is a fact, which deserves to be kept in constant remembrance, that, during the first session of Congress after his election, bills were reported proposing roads, canals, and other internal improvements, the construction of which was estimated to cost one hundred millions of dollars; and that there were memorials praying for the construction of others, estimated at the same cost. By the exercise of the veto power on the Maysville road bill, General Jackson defeated the whole system, saved the corrupting expenditure of two hundred millions of dollars, and averted from his country an immense national debt. Since that period, the same republican opposition to a national debt has characterized the whole policy of the two late administrations. But, unfortunately, as we believe, the State Legislatures have not profited by the example. They have gone on contracting public debts, until they are now estimated to have outstanding bonds to the amount of two hundred millions of dollars; exacting, annually, an interest of twelve millions of dollars from the industrious labor of the country. That there exists, with some, a fixed purpose to make this debt of the States, in some shape, a debt of the General Government, we cannot doubt. That a direct proposition to assume the State debts will be made, at least in any very short period, we do not believe; but that it will be made in an indirect manner—in the shape of a withdrawal of the land revenue from the Treasury, and its appropriation to the payment of these debts—we have no doubt. This proposition we will discuss in another part of this letter. We refer to it now, merely to show that a national debt, against which the republican party have constantly warred, is likely to become a part of the policy of that party which is just coming into power.

Whilst we thus congratulate you upon the fact that this administration, like that which preceded it, leaves the Government without a national debt, we are aware that there are not wanting those who have labored to create the impression that the Government is largely in debt. In their estimates of this debt, they differ from seven to forty millions; and, when they specify the items of indebtedness, it turns out that they include the fourth instalment of the surplus revenue, the claims for French spoliations before 1800, and other such claims, amounting in all to about nineteen millions. There is not the slightest pretext for charging any one of these as a debt upon the Government.

THE INDEPENDENT TREASURY SYSTEM.

This has been the great leading measure of the present administration. From the friends of banks as depositories of the public moneys it has en-

countered the most violent opposition. Those institutions had so long enjoyed the use of the money collected from the people, that they seemed to regard the proposition to withhold it from them as an infringement of their rights. They have struggled to regain it, with a zeal which, in our opinion, added no little to the excitement of the late political struggle. The limits of a circular letter will not allow us to discuss, at full length, the merits of this important measure. We must be content to present to you only some of the more prominent considerations connected with the subject.

The whole system consists simply in this: The moneys collected from the tariff and from the sales of lands, after 1843, are to be received in specie; and, when collected, they are to be kept and paid out by the agents of the Government in payment of the debts of the Government. And if any of the agents use or lend the moneys, they subject themselves to penitentiary punishment. It differs from the system which heretofore existed, in two leading particulars: in dispensing with the receipt of bank-paper into the Treasury, and in withholding from the banks the use of the public moneys.

We deny that there is either justice or safety in allowing the banks to loan and make profit on the revenue of the country. The revenue is paid by the people upon the merchandise which they buy from the merchants; and, when it goes into the Treasury, it is the money of the whole people. Under the former system, this money was placed by the Government in one or more banks, and permission was given to those banks to loan it out, in discounting notes and buying bills of exchange; and the profits thus made by trading upon the money of the people went entirely into the pockets of the few wealthy men who owned the banks. To enable ourselves to understand the extent and magnitude of this boon to the stockholders of deposit banks, we have examined the public records, and find that, during the last eight years when the United States Bank was the depository of the public revenue, there was collected from the people, by the tariff, *over two hundred and thirty millions of dollars*—making *twenty-nine millions* each year. This immense amount of money was placed by the Government in the United States Bank, and implied permission given to bank upon it. That bank treated this money as its capital, and discounted and traded upon it in the same manner. By way of showing to you the amount of profits made by this trading on the public money, we state, that, in a late report of the Secretary of the Treasury, he estimates the profits of the banks at 12 per centum per annum. These statements, which we have taken from the records of the country, will enable you to form some estimate of the immense profits which the owners of banks have made by the use of the people's money. You can also see how strong an inducement the owners of banks have had to resist the independent treasury system, and how deep an interest they had in the late political struggle. You can judge whether those men, who could make millions by banking on the people's money, would be likely to embark in the canvass, and bring their moneyed power to bear on the public mind. Can that system of policy be safe to the liberties of the people, and the purity of our institutions, which holds out such powerful temptations to enlist the moneyed power of the country in our elections? We beg of you to remember that it is not only by the free and liberal use of their money that bankers can operate on public sentiment, through hired presses and

their innumerable publications ; but that they possess the uncontrolled power of raising or sinking the prices of property, of producing plenty or scarcity of currency, and of creating prosperity or of producing pressure, ruin, and bankruptcy. We leave you to judge whether these strong inducements have not called into active exertion these powerful energies of bankers in the late excited canvass. The public money was the high prize held out to bankers as the inducement to exertion. Having shown you the magnitude of the prize, and the extent of the powers of these institutions, we leave you to determine, from your own knowledge of the nature of their interests, whether their powers were exerted or not.

But there is another point of view in which the policy, formerly obtained, of giving the public money to the banks for their use, is unsafe to the Government. Whenever the revenue is placed in banks, it is entirely beyond the control of the Government. The whole machinery of our great system is dependent upon the will or the caprice of irresponsible bank directors. They have but to close their doors and suspend, to jeopardize all the operations of Government. Can it be either safe or wise in the Government to make itself completely dependent upon the will of banks? Ought that system to be revived, which may at any moment involve the Government in so much difficulty? The suspension of 1837 taught us a lesson on this subject, which ought never to be forgotten. With nearly thirty millions of dollars in the banks, by one simultaneous movement the Government was cut off from its whole revenue, and left standing without a dollar to pay its debts.

There is another objection to the former policy of giving to the banks the use of the public money, which cannot be too carefully examined. It will at once occur to you, that the larger the amount of revenue placed in the banks each year is, the larger must be the profits of the banks. Their interest, then, is, that the amount of revenue collected from the people should be as large as possible. Hence it would be natural for the bankers to favor any policy of the Government which would increase the taxes. Just as the taxes are raised, the profits of those banks which may have the right of trading on the taxes must be increased. This policy naturally and inevitably enlists the whole banking power of the country in favor of high taxes. But, so soon as this right of trading on the taxes is taken away, and the taxes of the General Government are collected in specie, and kept by the agents of the Government, it becomes at once the interest of the banks to have as little specie, and, consequently, as little taxes as possible collected. They fall, naturally, on the side of the tax-payers, because their interest carries them to that side. We submit to your own judgment to determine the influence which a national bank, with a capital of one hundred millions of dollars, heading, leading, and controlling nine hundred banks, scattered through every State, could exert in favor of the high tax, or, which is the same thing, the high tariff policy.

Another serious objection to the former policy of depositing the public moneys in banks, is its increase of Executive power and patronage. It is a truth which cannot be too often repeated, that the Executive in our Government is clothed with extensive powers, and that there is a constant tendency in our system to an increase of these powers. Whatever measure, therefore, will limit or diminish power and patronage, merits a favorable consideration. Those banks selected by a President as the favored depositories of the revenue, whether they be national or State banks, be-

come naturally the fast friends and allies of the Executive. Every stockholder is interested to lend to the President his support, and to gratify his wishes, because the act of the President, in selecting the bank, has enabled its stockholders to increase largely their bank profits. Every director has the same interest, because he is also a stockholder. Every president, cashier, teller, and clerk, is similarly interested; because the greater the profits of the bank, the better able are the stockholders to give them high salaries. But not only are the stockholders, presidents, directors, cashiers, tellers, and clerks of favored deposit banks, interested to follow the will of a President, as individuals, in electioneering and voting, but they are interested to conform the policy and operations of the bank to the will of the President. If an expansion or a contraction will subserve the views of the President, they are interested to retain his favor by following his suggestions. To understand the full extent and danger of this branch of Executive patronage, you must remember that this immense army of bank-owners and officers are scattered through every State, and that they are the wealthy men of the country residing about the towns, and having the greatest facilities for operating on public sentiment. The President, located at Washington, in the centre of this system, has but to signify his will, and he has tens of thousands of the most wealthy and influential men in the several States interested directly to take the field in his behalf. If the public money is in a United States bank, then, besides his army of stockholders and bank officers, he possesses the power to interest the great central head of the bank system in his favor, and, through its agency, to give control and direction to the combined bank-power of the nation. In proposing the independent treasury system, Mr. Van Buren proposed to relinquish these vast sources of patronage and power. Instead of the thousands of bank-owners and officers, he proposed that all the duties of collecting, keeping, and paying out the public money, should be performed by the existing officers of the Government, with the addition of about half a dozen. Yet, he has been denounced as a tyrant, grasping after increase of powers! If increased power was his object, he ought to have proposed the old bank-deposit system.

The independent treasury system is sometimes said to be a union of the purse and sword in the hands of the President. The sword, is the power to raise armies and declare war; the purse, is the power to raise the means, by taxation, to support armies and carry on war. Neither of these powers belongs to the President. But what more control has the President over the public money under the independent treasury system, than under the bank-deposit system? We answer, emphatically, none. Under the bank-deposit system, the public money is placed in banks, to the credit of the Treasurer of the United States, an officer appointed and removed at the pleasure of the President. Under the independent treasury system, the money is in the hands of the public officer, subject to the order of the same Treasurer. It is just as easy for the President, by threats of removal, to induce the Treasurer to draw his order on a bank, as on the public officer. The order of the Treasurer, in either case, is all that the President requires to procure the money he may desire improperly to obtain. The bank could no more inquire for what such an order was drawn, or withhold its payment, than could the public officer.

These are some of the objections to the former policy of collecting the taxes, and giving them to banks to trade upon. In our estimation, they

have so much force, that it becomes our solemn duty to seek some other mode of collecting, keeping, and paying out the public money. The simplest mode would be to have officers of the Government to collect the revenue, to keep it safely until needed, and then to pay it out to those having claims upon the Government. This was the plan which was adopted by our patriotic forefathers when the Government went into operation; it was the plan approved by George Washington, afterwards sanctioned by Thomas Jefferson; and it is the same plan which Mr. Van Buren proposed in 1837, and which is now known as the independent-treasury system. It is called the independent treasury system, because it is a system under which the Treasury of the country is independent of the banks. They may expand or contract—they may suspend or fail—and, under this independent system, the Treasury is always safe, and the public moneys are always within the reach of the Government.

The independent-treasury system, so far from being new, or an untried experiment, is nothing more than an enlargement of the provisions of the law of 1789, approved by General Washington. Under both laws, the tariff duties are required to be paid in specie; and, under both, the money of the Government is collected, kept, and paid out by officers appointed by the Government. Surely, if this system merited one-tenth of the abuse which has been heaped upon it by partisans, it would never have been adopted by the pure patriots of the Revolution, and approved by the Father of his Country.

It is objected to by some as being a treasury bank; but it has no one feature of a bank. It loans no money, it issues no paper, it discounts no note, it has no directors. In fine, it has no one feature of a bank. We know that, amidst the misrepresentations which this system has undergone, it has been charged with issuing Treasury notes. This is wholly untrue. It has never had the slightest connexion with the issuance of the Treasury notes. We have already directed your attention to the subject of Treasury notes.

But the objection most harped upon by designing partisans, is, that the independent-treasury system makes one currency for the people and another for office-holders. If there is any truth in this, then General Washington sanctioned a law which made one currency for the people, and another for office-holders. The law which he sanctioned in 1789 required all the taxes to be paid in specie. But there is no truth in the charge. The independent-treasury system makes no currency, either for the people or for office-holders. It was never designed to make any. It collects the currency which the constitution made, and it pays out the same. Every man in the community has the right to do the same. But, in all candor, we ask whether any one is prepared to contend that the Government ought to receive and pay out the depreciated bank-paper of broken or suspended banks to our revolutionary soldiers, or to those of our later wars, or to our gallant tars who have borne our flag in every sea and climate? So long as the banks pay specie, it is as easy to pay specie to the Government as bank-paper. When the banks suspend, and the people choose to receive their depreciated paper, is that any reason why the Government should do the same?

But, on this subject, we maintain that an important fact is overlooked. A large portion of the tariff-taxes is paid into the Treasury by foreigners, who import their goods into our country. For what kind of money do

they sell their goods? Every body knows that their sales are for gold and silver, and all the money they carry away is taken in specie. Is it a hardship for the foreign importer to be required to pay his tariff-tax in the same kind of money that he sells his goods for, and takes from the country? And when the Government has collected the specie from foreigners, is it to be demanded that she shall not pay it in payment of her debts?

But our limits forbid us to pursue this subject further. Giving to the objections to the independent-treasury system their full force, we earnestly ask if they do not fall infinitely short of the objections to the bank-deposit system? But to show how untenable are the objections to this great measure, we conclude by adducing the authority of the Hon. John Bell. In his speech made in Congress in 1840, on this subject, he said:

"I propose, first, to point out the objections to this bill, supposing it to be administered and carried into execution in good faith, according to its fair and obvious provisions, and in accordance, also, with the interpretation which its principal supporters in Congress have given it. The abuses it is liable to, I shall remark upon separately.

"And in this view of this famous scheme of a sub-treasury, (that is, if it shall be honestly administered,) I am compelled to say, that, in my judgment, it is one of the most innocent and lamb-like inventions of the age. It can do neither *any great good nor any great harm to the great interests of either trade, agriculture, or manufactures*. It can only prove injurious and embarrassing to the Government itself, in the management of its fiscal affairs."

* * * * *

"In this view of it, let us now see what possible effect this sub-treasury can have upon the condition of the currency, or upon the general course of trade. The President assures us, in his message, that it is not expected or intended that there shall ever be more than five millions of a surplus in the Treasury, under its operation, at any one time. This is to be the maximum accumulation in gold and silver. Nay, he gives us the example of last year to show that it will be generally much less—say a million and a half, or half a million. The idea of the plan is, that more than five millions of specie will never be required for the use of the Treasury or the Government at any one time. The payments from the Treasury, it is expected, will, in each month or quarter of the year, be so nearly equal in amount to the payments into it, or that one will so keep pace with the other, as never to withdraw from the circulation of the country or the banks a greater sum at any time. Therefore, five millions of specie, in active circulation between the Government, its debtors and creditors, it is confidently stated, will answer all the public demands. Hence it is argued by the friends of this measure, that neither the commerce of the country nor the banks can be materially affected by it. *I agree with them perfectly in this view of the subject. The whole project will turn out a mere humbug—neither doing any good nor much harm.*"

Experience is said to be the surest test of truth. Judging by this standard, the independent treasury—which has now been for some time in operation, with no defalcations or failures of any kind—can safely challenge a superiority over all other modes of collecting, keeping, and disbursing the public moneys.

THE NEW JERSEY ELECTION.

This case attracted too much attention, whilst it was under examination, to be omitted in the present address. It is true that, after the false clamor which was raised on the occasion had been fully exposed by the evidence, a strong inclination was manifested to permit the whole matter to die away and be forgotten. But the attempt was too bold and flagitious on the rights of the people of that State, and too dangerous in its example to the other portions of the country, to allow us to pass over it in silence. The New Jersey election was held at the times and places, and in the manner, appointed by law. The judges, inspectors, and clerks, were all at their post. The people came forward, and voted according to their own wishes; and then retired to their homes, leaving it to the proper officers to make the returns agreeably to law. Wherever any dispute arose

in the progress of the election, the judges and inspectors heard the evidence, decided the legality or illegality of the vote, and admitted or rejected it accordingly. The law required the returns to be made from the different townships to the clerks of the counties in which they were situated, and by them to be returned to the Governor, who was to grant certificates or commissions "to those who might receive the highest number of votes." He was authorized to commission no other person whatsoever than such as had received the *highest number of votes*. When the returns came in from the townships to the clerks, they gave copies of them, in many instances, to private persons, and to printers of newspapers, showing that the democratic candidates had been elected by majorities ranging from one to two hundred votes. The public mind became settled and composed, under the conviction that such had been the result.

In a short time, however, an unusual number of the leaders of the opposite party were known to be assembled from different points of the State, at Newark, a few days before the final returns were to be made by the clerks to the Governor. Soon after that, it began to be whispered about that it was not yet altogether certain that the democratic candidates would be commissioned; that some of the clerks might not consider it their duty to return to the Governor all the votes returned from the township *to them*, and thereby the democratic candidates might be defeated. In a few days the secret was disclosed that the clerks from the counties of Middlesex and Cumberland had taken it on themselves to throw away the votes of two townships, (South Amboy and Millville,) by leaving *blanks* in their returns for those townships in which the democratic candidates had received overwhelming majorities. The facts were proved on the clerks, and made known to the Governor; but nothing could induce him to send (as the law required him to do) for more full and perfect returns. Nothing that *could* be said seemed of any avail. He took the returns, false and fraudulent as they were, and made out his commissions, and handed them to the defeated candidates accordingly.

The only excuse for such strange conduct was, that, if he had done wrong, Congress could disregard his certificate, and give the seats to the opposite claimants. Congress finally did so, just as he had predicted; and now a great clamor has been raised against the democratic party for having set aside this gross fraud, practised by the Governor of New Jersey and his privy council, on the dearest rights of the people of that ancient and gallant State. Congress did and ought to set aside a fraud when practised by a Governor, as soon as if practised by the most subordinate officer. It has been said that we dishonored the *broad seal* of the State. That broad seal was dishonored the moment it was used to cover a *false return*, and thereby to cheat and defraud that very people whose rights and liberties it was meant to confirm and maintain. The records of the people were made, by the decision of the House, stronger than the seal of the Governor; and the purity and freedom of the ballot-box were preferred to the forms and ceremonies of official usurpation.

On the first day of the session, both parties presented themselves, claiming to be sworn in as members. One party stood on the Governor's certificate, and the other relied on the poll-books actually kept at the elections, to show that the Governor had certified what was not true, and that *they*, in fact, received the highest number of votes cast at the election. Congress, or rather the House of Representatives, not willing to

arrest all other business, ordered both parties to stand aside for the present, and referred the whole case to the Committee of Elections. The committee took it up, and soon ascertained, *beyond all doubt*, that Messrs. Dickerson, Vroom, and their associates, had received the highest number of votes; which was all that the laws of New Jersey required, in order to have entitled them to the commissions of the Governor. Indeed, the written pleadings of the opposition claimants *clearly* admitted the fact. In saying that the committee ascertained that these gentlemen received the highest number of votes, we mean to say, *of lawful votes*; for the whole committee (whigs and democrats) solemnly voted that all the votes received, and passed by the judges and inspectors, were to be regarded, in law, as lawful votes, so far as we were then engaged on that preliminary question. Now, we aver that the committee never did report on any other than lawful votes; nor on any votes which the whigs themselves had not pronounced lawful, as above set forth. This fact ought to sink deep into the public mind. It dissipates and destroys all the false ideas which have been held out to the people on this part of the subject. It may be asked, if the committee was not desired to report on unlawful votes as well as lawful ones, why did the democratic party in the House vote against inserting the word "lawful" into the resolution? This is susceptible of easy explanation. The committee had been out nearly two months, and had made no report. The opposition newspapers and letter-writers and orators were constantly complaining, "why do you not let in one party or the other *temporarily*, so that New Jersey might have some voice in what was doing in the House, and leave the final right to the ultimate decision of the committee and of the House?" This was constantly said and written; whilst that party, in the committee, with the aid of the chairman, was the whole and sole cause why this was not done. They had not only prevented a preliminary report, showing who had received the highest number of votes, but had given to the whig claimants two months more to traverse the whole State of New Jersey, to see if they could not disprove some of the votes given in at the election; but which, until such proof was obtained, were obliged to stand, by their own decisions, as lawful ones. The democratic party of the House was disposed not to keep the State in that condition for two months more; whilst their opponents, on whom the whole blame should have fallen, were unjustly misrepresenting and abusing them for what they themselves had perpetrated. Hence it was, that, when the resolution was introduced requiring the committee to report, forthwith, who received the greatest number of votes, (meaning, of course, the votes cast in the election; every one of which the whigs of the committee had voted to be lawful, as above explained,) the whole whig party became opposed to the resolution, because they were making political capital out of the delay. They wanted no preliminary report, unless it were in favor of their own men; and would submit to no temporary filling of the vacant seats from New Jersey, unless their own favorites were to be the incumbents. But they knew it would not do to oppose the resolution directly and openly, for that would open the eyes of the public at once. Hence they sought to defeat the resolution, by introducing the word *lawful* before the word *votes*. This *they* thought would stave off the report until the expiration of the two months which they had allowed for taking testimony; during all which time

they would have the benefit of all the clamor which they could unjustly raise for the delay.

The democratic party, knowing *their object* to be *delay* for political effect, and knowing that the whole committee (whigs and democrats) had determined all the votes before them to be "lawful votes" in every preliminary inquiry, could see no necessity for the insertion of that word *lawful*. They *could not* report any *unlawful votes*, because the testimony to show them such was not yet taken; and because, as we have before stated, every whig in the committee had voted that the votes polled at the election were to be regarded as lawful until the contrary was proven. It was all a trick and device for party purposes; and the democrats knew it to be such, and therefore voted against it as unnecessary. To show that the motion was made for *mere party opposition*, after the word "lawful" was inserted, all the opposition party voted *against* the resolution, and the democratic party *for* it. Now, why did the democratic party vote *for* the resolution *after* the word "lawful" was inserted? It was because they *knew* it did not alter the real meaning of the resolution. They saw that the word "forthwith" was still retained in it, and that the proviso that nothing contained in the resolution should be so construed as to prevent the said committee from prosecuting their inquiries then in progress, in New Jersey, as to the unlawfulness of any of the votes cast in the election, would still preserve the original meaning and object of the resolution. With this proviso, it was plain—perfectly plain—what the House wished and intended. Now, we assert before the world, that in the report which *was* made, not one single *unlawful* vote was counted, and not one single vote which the whig members of the committee had not themselves voted was to be regarded as lawful. We proceed to state further, (what ought never to be forgotten in this case,) that when the two months were out, the parties returned with their testimony; several hundred votes were contested; the committee labored day and night; and, after all, it turned out that *more unlawful* votes had been given to the whig than to the democratic candidates. In short, the whole case proved a bold and impudent conspiracy against the purity of the ballot-box, and a settled design to overturn and disregard the rights of the people of New Jersey. We took sides with the people; we maintained their just rights, against those who would have trampled them into the dust. We look back now with just pride to the course we pursued in all the stages of the New Jersey case.

THE TENNESSEE LAND BILL.

This great measure has at last been accomplished. In 1824, the Legislature memorialized Congress earnestly on the subject. That memorial was prepared by the present Executive of the State, with great ability; and the subject has been pending before Congress ever since. From 1825 to 1838, it was contended for in the form of a *donation* to the State; but without success. In the winter of 1838-'39, it was asked for in the form of a *cession* to the State, whilst the proceeds were to be returned to the national Treasury. In the winter of 1839-'40, so great was the jealousy of the old against the new States, on the subject of the public land lying within their limits, that it was deemed advisable to put the proposition in the form of a *mere agency*, on the part of the State, in disposing

of these lands. In this form, it is now the law of the land. It secures to the occupants their homes at twelve and a half cents per acre ; it brings all the other lands subsequently into entry at the same moderate price, for a limited period, and then at any price the Legislature may determine on. The holders of North Carolina warrants are to have, for one year after the first session of the Legislature, the privilege of locating their warrants, not interfering with the occupants ; and all warrants not so entered may, if presented within a limited term, be satisfied out of the proceeds of the sale, at the rate of twelve and a half cents per acre. We congratulate the whole State on its passage. In a few years, all legislation about our public lands, so fruitful of expense, and so often interrupting the harmony which should ever exist between our State and North Carolina, will now be terminated ; all the lands within our limits, fit for appropriation, will have ripened into full titles ; and the accruing receipts into the Treasury from their taxation must be very considerable. Individuals, living either in or out of the counties, have now an opportunity to become freeholders on the most moderate terms ; and such as chance to live near or adjoining these lands, can take them up at cheap rates for cultivation, pasture-grounds, water-power, or range. To the occupants, who reside on these lands, and whose toil and labor have given them their chief value, the law must be peculiarly acceptable. Congress has at last done them justice, and done it with a generosity which ought not and will not soon be forgotten. We have all zealously labored to accomplish this great object ; and all now congratulate you on the happy result. The majority in the House was very great ; but such were the arguments and speeches of our two honorable Senators, Messrs. ANDERSON and NICHOLSON, in that body, that they obtained for it there almost a unanimous vote.

Having directed your attention to some of the most prominent measures which have marked the administration of Mr. VAN BUREN, we now pass on to a discussion of that system of policy which is to be pursued by the new administration. The occurrences of the present session of Congress have developed, beyond controversy, what that system of policy will be. We have heard the leading members of the Harrison party avow, time after time, in debate, that the measures to be proposed and adopted under the new administration are—

1. A national bank ;
2. A distribution of the proceeds of the sales of the public lands ;
3. An increase of the tariff ; and
4. A law to punish officers for interfering in elections.

On no one of these measures are the friends of General Harrison in Congress united. We have heard Harrison members of Congress distinctly denounce a national bank, a distribution of land revenue, an increase of the tariff ; and, on the gag-bill, they have never shown any thing like unanimity. Yet, notwithstanding this diversity of sentiment, they did unite in elevating to the presidency a man, about whose political sentiments there is even yet great room for controversy. But whilst this diversity exists in the ranks of the Harrison party, there is no question but that the large majority of that party are in favor of the measures above designated, and that that majority will make them the distinct policy of the new administration.

The first remark which strikes us as important and singular, is, that

there is no one of these measures which is not deemed unconstitutional by a large portion of our countrymen. No one of them comes plainly within the delegated powers of Congress. No one of them can be adopted without resorting to the federal mode of construing the constitution. These remarks are applicable to all of the proposed measures. We must, necessarily, be brief in our remarks on each separate measure.

A NATIONAL BANK.

The system of banking, which has always existed in our country, is radically defective. Its effects upon the morals and happiness of the people have proved eminently disastrous. At the bottom of all its defects, we place the power which they enjoy, of creating and circulating a paper currency, as a *substitute*, and not as a *representative*, of gold and silver. So long as banks issue only as much paper as they have specie on hand, no great evil can arise. In that case, the bank paper is a representative of specie. But the moment this limit is exceeded, and banks commence issuing their paper to an amount beyond their specie, the dangers commence. A few authentic facts, derived from a late report of the Treasury Department, will place the dangers of this unrestricted power of our banks in its true light. In that report, under the head "*Aggregate of losses since 1789, to the people, through the existence of banks, and the use of bank paper,*" we find the following to be the results of careful investigation:

Summary.

1. Losses by bank failures	-	-	-	-	\$108,885,721
2. Losses by suspensions of specie payments, and the consequent depreciation on their notes	-	-	-	-	95,000,000
3. Losses by fluctuations in bank currency, affecting prices, extravagance in living, sacrifices of property, &c., &c.	-	-	-	-	150,000,000
					353,885,721

Here is exhibited an estimated loss of three hundred and fifty-three millions of dollars to the people; the whole of which has grown out of the dangerous power given to banks, to *create* as well as to *loan* currency. It is to this same defect that the expansions and contractions of the banks, and the consequent fluctuations and uncertainty in the prices of property and of labor, are attributable. So long as banks exercise this unrestricted power, it will be vain in us to calculate upon any uniformity or stability in the currency, or the value of property. The most effectual remedy, which, in our judgment, promises to operate as an important check to this evil, is a bankrupt law, applicable to all stock banks, whether chartered by the States or the General Government. This measure would provide, that, whenever such a bank should refuse to redeem its notes in specie, in such manner as was required by its charter, its affairs should be wound up, in such time and manner as would be fair and just to debtors and creditors. By the constitution, Congress is authorized to pass uniform bankrupt laws; and under this power, we believe a law may be made applicable to stock banks, which would restrain their excessive issues of paper.

We admit that a uniform currency—by which we mean, one that will pass at par in every portion of our country—is an object much desired; but, at the same time, we insist that a stable currency—by which we mean, one uniform in quantity as well as quality—is much more desirable. If the issues of banks can be checked, and their paper be kept convertible at all times into specie, the great mass of the country suffer no inconvenience or loss. We know of no other power *in Congress*, to control the excesses of bank issues, and to secure a stable paper currency, but that of applying to banks, owned by individuals, the provisions of a bankrupt law.

We are aware that a very large portion of the friends of General Harrison entertain the opinion that a national bank would furnish the best remedy for the evils of which we have spoken. To this subject, in its several bearings, we will now call your attention.

We deem it unfortunate that we are unable to inform you, with entire certainty, of the precise plan of the bank which the friends of General Harrison design to impose upon the country. Its capital will doubtless be as much as fifty millions, and probably as much as one hundred millions of dollars. Of this capital, we have no doubt that a very large portion will be set apart for individual subscribers.

The first great difficulty which suggests itself, is, in relation to the source from whence the specie is to be derived to put such a bank into operation. No one will think of establishing a national bank, except on a specie basis. If the bank is to have a capital of no more than fifty millions, we ask you to reflect how this amount is to be procured. It is estimated that there is now in the United States about eighty millions of specie. To found a national bank, would require two-thirds of all the gold and silver of the country. What effect would this have upon the State banks, and upon the existing embarrassments of the times? Will any one deny that the consequence to the banks and to the country would be disastrous? In a speech of the Hon. Henry A. Wise, delivered in the House of Representatives on the 27th of January, 1841, and published in the *National Intelligencer*, in opposing the policy of an early establishment of a national bank, he uses this emphatic language:

“There never was a time when the resumption of specie-payments, or the creation of a national bank, did not produce contraction and pressure; and there never will be. What would both at once not do?”

This is the authority of one of the acknowledged leaders of the Harrison party in the House of Representatives; and the sentiment is literally true. Where, then, is the relief, which was so liberally promised to the people, which was to follow the election of General Harrison, and the creation of a national bank?

But we may be told that a national bank may be created by borrowing the specie. Where can it be borrowed? And if it could be borrowed at all, are we prepared to make a national debt of fifty or a hundred millions of dollars to foreign capitalists? The people of the United States are not yet prepared to abandon their old republican hostility to a great national debt, and to become dependent upon some foreign Government. These are difficulties which meet us at the very threshold of the subject; and we have heard no suggestion which removes them. But suppose it possible that they may be removed, and that Mr. Wise is wrong in asserting that a bank cannot be created without aggravating the embarrassments of the country: the next inquiry which arises, is, whether such an institution would pro-

vide for the country a stable and uniform currency? So far as its own notes would constitute a part of the currency, we admit that, on account of its immense capital, and its credit, derived from its connexion with the Government, they might be nearer of par value throughout the country than those of any other bank. But the notes of such a bank would constitute only a *portion* of the whole currency of the country. In large commercial transactions, and in the transmission of funds from one point to another, the notes of a national bank would constitute the currency; but in the ten thousand smaller branches of trade, the notes of State banks would necessarily still be the currency. To make a national bank whose notes fill the large channels of trade, is only to provide a currency for the rich traders and the office-holders; whilst the small dealers are left to use the inferior currency issued by State banks, unless the creation of a national bank will regulate and elevate State bank paper to a par with its own notes. The only possible way in which a national bank can regulate State banks, and keep their paper equal to its own, must be by restraining them in the amount of their issues, and keeping them in a condition always to redeem their notes with specie. How vast must be the powers of an institution which can curb and restrain the cupidity of nine hundred banks, with capitals amounting to five hundred millions of dollars! The very idea of erecting an institution with such tremendous powers, is enough to make every lover of liberty shudder for the safety of his country. Yet the whole virtue of a national bank consists in its possessing such powers. Without them, it is upon a level with the State banks, only adding so much more to the evils already existing.

But, conceding to a national bank the power to regulate and control the policy of State banks: we ask you to reflect how little of your boasted freedom is left beyond its powers. Are you not aware that the value of all your property is regulated by the quantity of the currency in circulation? Do you not know that the price of your produce, the products of your labor, is also regulated by the amount of circulating medium in the country? In 1835-'6, your property and your produce bore a high value; and that was the consequence of the abundance of circulating currency. Now, the value of your property and of your produce is sunk much below its value in those years; and this has been produced by the reduction of the amount of currency. A national bank possesses the power to regulate the amount of currency at its will and pleasure; of course, then, it has the power to regulate the value of your property and the price of your labor, at its own pleasure. The sun may shine propitiously upon your fields—the rains of heaven may fall in liberal showers—your labors may be rewarded with an abundant harvest; but still it may rot in your barns for want of a price, at the discretion of this omnipotent institution, which determines the value of all your sweat and toil. But this is not all: it can regulate the currency; it can make it abundant; it raises the price of property; the flood-gates of speculation are lifted; you are tempted to use your credit in purchasing property; you are in debt, and expect to pay from the proceeds of your labor. The bank changes its policy; the currency is contracted; the price of property falls; the contraction continues; your property still falls; your debt falls due; and, to pay it, the very bread is sold from your wife and children. How much of liberty is left worth preserving, we again ask you, with an institution in our country possessing such powers, wielded by a few wealthy merchants and capitalists of the north, residing far dis-

tant from the great body of the people, and possessing no sympathies in common with them?

But shall we be told that our fears are unfounded; and that such a bank, though it has the power, will merely exercise it to an extent beneficial to the country? We might as well be told that a despotism was the best form of government, because the king, though he has unlimited powers, will only exercise them for the good of his subjects. We prefer neither to trust the goodness of a despot, nor the patriotism of a national bank! Who are to be the owners of this bank? who its directors? Are they to be your friends? or are they to be responsible to you for their conduct? Why will they take the stock? Will it be merely to benefit the country, by regulating the currency? or will it be to increase their already overgrown wealth? You have not to be told that capitalists take stock in banks to make money; and that, whatever policy will make them the most money, will best suit their patriotism. Judge White was right when he said, in opposing a national bank, that the stockholders would pursue their own interest in managing it; that, when their interest dictated, they would make money plenty; and, when they could make most by it, they would make money scarce. The nature and interests of individual State banks are precisely the same with those of a national bank. We have had sad experience with the management of the former—we have been ruined by them. Why should we expect more wisdom or more patriotism from a national bank, which differs from such individual State banks mainly in its greater capacity to do mischief?

We have said that a national bank, if it possesses power enough to regulate the currency, possesses necessarily the power to regulate the value of your property. But this is not the whole danger. The city of London is the great centre of the commercial world; and the Bank of London is the great engine through which Great Britain exercises her power over commerce. Wherever the paper system of banking exists, the Bank of London is the real head of the system. The commercial history of Great Britain and the United States shows the fact, that our banking institutions have at all times pursued the policy pointed out by the example of British banks. Expansions and contractions have taken place in the two countries at the same periods. The sympathy existing between these institutions in the two countries, is intimate and close. We see this in the fact, that whenever there is an abundance or a scarcity of bank paper in one country, there is a like abundance or scarcity in the other. This connexion amounts to a state of *dependence*, on the part of our banking system, upon that of *England*. The Bank of England regulates the currency of Great Britain; it is a national institution, and is the model after which we are to copy. In regulating the currency, it fixes, with the absolute will of a despot, the price of property and of labor in that country. Hence, it fixes, too, the price of all imports into that kingdom; and, among other imports, our cotton, and other productions of our country. We look to the Liverpool market to ascertain the value of our cotton at any given period. To make our dependence still more complete, the Bank of Great Britain now needs a central institution in this country, through which she can operate. For many years, she has had such an institution in the United States Bank. Let us erect another, and it becomes at once an arm of British power, through which the Bank of England can, with ease, control and regulate our currency, and the value

of our property, to suit the wishes and interests of her own capitalists. The very independence of our country is involved in this question of a national bank. Our condition becomes almost as humiliating as if we were but British colonies, by submitting to the erection of an institution which completes the chain of our dependence. We can escape this degraded condition, by assuming the regulation of our currency through our own laws; subjecting our State banks to regulations and terms which will make them adapt their circulation to a specie standard—that standard which can alone save us from the British bank-paper standard.

We have insisted that a national bank, from its very nature, will be governed by the interest of its stockholders, in its mode of regulating State banks. We now maintain that we are sustained in this position by the history of the national Bank of England and the late national Bank of the United States. The whole history of both these national institutions has been marked by successive periodical expansions and contractions of the currency, attended by the necessary consequences of high and low prices, fictitious prosperity, and grinding adversity. However these institutions may have succeeded in keeping their own notes at par, they failed utterly to secure steadiness and stability in the value of property. We assert, that no five successive years can be named, during the existence of the late United States Bank, in which there was not a revulsion in the monetary affairs of the country, accompanied by corresponding pressure and hard times. The bank commenced operations in 1817, and in 1819, '20, and '21, the whole country was full of bankruptcy and distress, produced, as Judge White asserted in the Senate, by the policy of the bank. In 1824, Mr. Clay described the condition of the country as full of wretchedness and misery. In 1827-'28, you will remember that there was another period of hard times. In 1834, the same scenes were renewed. The United States Bank was at that period struggling to force a recharter from Congress. It had attempted to secure its renewal, in 1832, by liberal accommodations. It succeeded in Congress, but was defeated by the Roman firmness of Andrew Jackson. He saw that the bank was contesting the point of supremacy with the Government; that its powers of corruption were boldly brought into exercise. He saw it squandering its means in buying up friends to aid it in the struggle. He was satisfied that it was no longer a safe depository of the public moneys, and he caused them to be removed. This was the death-blow to that corrupt and corrupting institution. By the aid of the public money, it was waging a war upon the very independence of the Government. Having failed to conquer the Government, its corruption was directed to the Legislature of Pennsylvania; and there it succeeded. Its distinguished president then declared that its charter was better, and the institution stronger, than when it was a national institution. It was chartered by the Legislature, with the same name, the same directors, the same stockholders, and the same capital. It went on in its high career of speculating in politics, in stocks, and in cotton; making every shift, and resorting to every device, to maintain its credit and hide its rottenness. But the exposure has at length taken place; and that institution—once so powerful and arrogant that it dared to measure arms with the Hero of New Orleans; that was so rich, that it squandered its millions on favorite politicians—that institution has sunk into utter disgrace and bankruptcy. We rejoice that General Jackson has lived to see his own sagacity, in pronouncing the institution unsound and unsafe,

fully illustrated. To all intents and purposes, this experiment of a national bank has utterly failed; and the only excuse that can be offered by its friends is, the miserable pretext that it was no longer a national institution.

We have had an opportunity of testing the correctness of the opinion, that a national bank will not, if it can, regulate the currency issued by State banks, in another way. The Secretary of the Treasury, during the present session of Congress, was required to ascertain and report the prices of State bank paper at Philadelphia, each year, from 1824 to 1836. He procured the information, and made his report; and, upon examination of its details, we find that the fact is clearly established, that the United States Bank did not have the happy effect of producing any thing like uniformity in the State bank paper. Taking the highest and lowest prices of Tennessee bank paper during each year, and the result is as follows:

1824.	1825.	1826.	1827.	1828.	1829.	1830.
30 dis.	15 a 20 d.	20 a 10 d.	7 a 10 d.	10 a 9 d.	6 a 10 d.	7½ d.
1831.	1832.	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.	
7½ a 5 d.	5 dis.	5 a 3 d.	5 dis.	5 dis.	3 a 6 d.	

This report shows a similar state of facts in reference to the prices of all other State bank notes.

With mercantile men, the great argument in favor of a national bank is, its capacity to regulate and keep down exchanges. By the rate of exchange, we mean the cost of transporting specie from one point to another. If a merchant in Nashville owes a thousand dollars in Philadelphia, and has the money in specie, he will be willing to pay for a check on Philadelphia just as high a premium as it will cost him to send his specie. The premium which he pays for the check is the exchange. So long as State bank paper is redeemable in specie, and the rate of exchange is left to be fixed by the fair competition of trade, exchange may be had at the same rate with specie, State bank notes, or national bank paper. But the misfortune is, that ever since the establishment of the United States Bank, in 1817, the business of exchange has been monopolized by the banks, and the competition of trade in exchange has been broken up. This monopoly was enjoyed by the United States Bank, and it became one of its chief sources of profit. Prior to the establishment of that bank, buying bills of exchange made no part of the legitimate business of our banks. That branch of trade was left free, to be regulated by the competition of capital. Our mercantile friends deceive themselves and others from looking at the single fact, that the United States Bank, during its existence at Nashville, furnished checks on Philadelphia at a very low rate. But they fail to look at the whole operation and its consequences. The United States Bank at Nashville had no funds at Philadelphia on which to check. It was therefore necessary for it to supply the means of paying their checks at Philadelphia. To do this, it resorted to the purchase of bills of exchange on New Orleans, and other southern points. This was the origin of the system of bill operations—this the beginning of that commission-merchant system, which has proved so heavy a curse to our State. Bills of exchange were first drawn on cotton, or other produce shipped to New Orleans. It was a profitable operation to the bank; and if it furnished checks on the east at a low rate, it was sure to make a

good profit by its operations in southern bills of exchange. But it soon became a mode of borrowing money from the bank, by those who had no produce to ship; and as it was more profitable to the bank than discounting notes, it was indulged to an excess; the consequences of which are even now seriously felt in our State. To the United States Bank, and its great kindness in furnishing eastern exchange so low, are we indebted for that destructive and ruinous system of drawing and redrawing bills of exchange, which has proved so heavy a curse to our State.

Without pursuing this part of the argument further, we have no hesitation in saying, that, to a people jealous of their rights and liberties, the political power of a national bank ought to be a conclusive objection. In the late contest, the advocates of General Harrison inculcated the doctrine that no change could make our condition worse. If our liberties are worth preserving, then this sentiment deserves marked condemnation. If it is better for us to be the degraded dependents of British insolence and oppression, than the high-born sons of American freedom, then is the sentiment of the Harrison partisans true. If it is our interest to surrender the freedom of thought, and the high prerogative of voting, into the hands of a President wielding the powers of a national bank, then we should tamely submit, and consent to wear the yoke which would so well become our servile necks. But we deny and repudiate the doctrine, and we appeal to you to join us in putting the seal of reprobation upon it forever. If a national bank is created, it must owe its success to a party triumph; it must be a party machine, and the close ally of "the powers that be." To the full extent of its immense powers, it becomes a branch of patronage to the federal head. It will act in concert with those who gave it being; with them, it will fight the political battles of the country, and struggle to perpetuate the ascendancy of its party. To what extent, and with what success, such an engine can exert an influence in the party struggles of the country, we need not undertake to calculate. Surely, if it can control a thousand State banks, its powers on the public mind must be tremendous. What President would ever dare to cross its will? Such an iron-nerved patriot as Andrew Jackson might venture to dispute its sovereign power; but we have no hope of seeing the presidency again filled by a man who would dare to encounter such an adversary! The President will ultimately be forced to succumb to the bank, and become the mere reflector of its will. We ask you with calmness and deliberation to reflect upon the dangers to public liberty from such an institution, in all its aspects; and then determine whether you are prepared to hazard so much for any supposed benefits that such a bank could confer.

To the people of Tennessee, the question of a national bank possesses peculiar interest. We have embarked in a State bank, in which we have vested the sacred common-school fund; and to sustain which, we have incurred a debt, and pledged our unsullied faith. To create a national bank, is to jeopardize our own institution, and run the risk of having it destroyed, and our people burdened with taxation, to save our credit from disgrace.

If we had no remedy to propose, in lieu of a national bank, to correct the evils of our banking system, we should be less surprised that any portion of our fellow-citizens should advocate such an institution. We now present another, and, in every respect, a better and safer remedy. We present the proposition to subject the stock-bank corporations to the

operation of a bankrupt law ; and we express our confident belief, that, if a national bank is not immediately chartered, our remedy will, at no remote day, be adopted.

In conclusion, allow us to press strongly on your minds the fact, that if Congress can make a bank at all, it can make it for a hundred years as easy as for one year ; and, when made, though its charter be for a century of years, according to the prevailing doctrines of most of those who support and advocate such a bank, no power nor revolution can pull it down. All that we apprehend from it may occur, and the whole country may heap curses upon it ; but, according to their doctrine, it must stand. This is the doctrine of those who are for chartering such a bank. Shall we tie up the hands of the people, and erect a power supreme above them ? Let these things be well considered before you make up your minds to such a fearful alternative.

DISTRIBUTION OF LAND REVENUE AND THE TARIFF.

The proposition to distribute amongst the States the proceeds of the public lands, has long been a favorite measure with Mr. Clay, of Kentucky. It was originally suggested as the means of getting clear of a surplus in the Treasury, which was apprehended under the belief that the high tariff of 1828 could not be so reduced immediately as to avoid a surplus. But it is now proposed under wholly different circumstances. The tariff has been brought down, until it produces, together with the sales of lands, barely a sufficiency to meet the most economical expenditures of the Government. In this condition of the Treasury, it is now proposed to withdraw from the revenue, which is barely sufficient for the purposes of the Government, five millions of dollars annually, to be distributed amongst the State Legislatures. We pronounce it one of the boldest grasps after power, and one of the most reckless assaults upon the independence of the States, that was ever made. It is but the deceptive beginning of the revival of the old American system. A bribe of five millions of dollars is held out to the States, to induce them to submit without murmur to the collection of five millions more by an increase of the tariff ; and to make the delusion still more complete, the tariff is pretended to be applied only to luxuries. Mr. Clay, himself, at the present session, was compelled to admit, that if his bill passed, it would render it necessary to resort to a tariff to supply the deficiency. But, that the real design is to revive the high tariff policy, we will show by the words of Mr. WISE, one of the leaders of the Harrison party in the House of Representatives, taken from the same speech to which we have already referred. He said : " I say, I see a disposition now to prepare the way for a future tariff and distribution ; and if an extra session is to be called, that future is not far distant." He then proceeded to adduce ten distinct signs indicating the policy of a tariff.

The proposition to supply the deficiency by a tariff on luxuries, is a mere shift to escape the odium of reviving the tariff policy. A tariff on wines and silks, is a tax upon the produce sent to France in exchange for her wines and silks. If the rich pay the tariff, because they use wines and silks, they get it back from the labor of the people upon which they live. This new tariff may begin with wine and silk, but it will end with sugar, coffee, salt, iron, and all the other necessities. We say to those gentlemen who

are for a tariff on luxuries, We are prepared to go with you to tax wines and silks; but we want you to go along with us, at the same time, in reducing the tax on salt, iron, and other necessities of life. For every dollar they will agree to take off from the necessities, we are willing to add one, or even more, if it be needed as revenue merely, under an economical administration of the Government, on luxuries, until they have taxed luxuries to their hearts' content.

But how does the interest of Tennessee stand on this question of distributing the land revenue? Mr. Clay proposes to deduct from the five millions derived from lands, twelve and a half per cent.—amounting to \$625,000—and to give it to the States where the lands lie. In this, Tennessee has no share, although she has managed and disposed of all the public lands in her limits, at her own expense, and without any compensation. Deducting this handsome gift to some seven or eight States, he proposes to distribute the balance (making \$4,365,000) amongst the twenty-six States, in proportion to their population. By this ratio, Tennessee would receive about \$218,000. To supply this five millions taken from the Treasury, he proposes to impose a tariff; and, of course, Tennessee will pay her proportion, according to her population. Instead of paying back her proportion of the \$4,375,000, she must pay back her proportion of the \$5,000,000, and the cost of its collection, which would be about \$350,000 more. Instead of paying back \$218,000 each year, she must pay back \$267,000 each year—giving nearly \$50,000 annually for the use of \$218,000, which is about 25 or 30 per cent. per annum! This is the liberal, just, and equitable proposition made to you, to buy your acquiescence in the revival of the American system!

But you will naturally ask, why do the Harrison party desire to “distribute a deficiency?” in the language of Mr. Wise. We can only give you the reason assigned by Mr. Clay and his friends, in their speeches at the present session. They said that the States were in debt, and this distribution would enable them to pay some of the interest on their debts! It is, then, a deceptive proposition—to tax the people of the whole country, to pay the debts of those States which are unable promptly to pay their own debts. We feel justified in predicting that it will terminate in a high tariff and an assumption of the State debts, with a national debt of two hundred millions. This is the system of policy in prospect, which is now in its first stage.

THE GAG BILL.

This famous measure—the genuine kinsman of the old sedition law of John Adams—was brought forward again by General Harrison's attorney general, (Mr. Crittenden,) at the present session of Congress. When presented on former occasions, it subjected any officer, who dared to express his opinions in elections, to trial in court, and severe punishment. But just at this time, when General Harrison is about taking the executive chair, the measure was made to assume a new shape. To give it more plausibility, and make the bitter pill more palatable, it was made to connect with it the sanction of Mr. Jefferson's policy in reference to his officers. But now it provides no trial! The proposition, as now brought forward, and as it is hereafter to be pressed, is, to make it the duty of the President (upon his own discretion, to be sure) to remove all officers who shall,

in his opinion, have attempted to influence votes in an election, by persuasion or argument. Besides being an assault upon the constitutional right of speech, and the freedom of the press, it is a bold attempt to legalize the doctrine of "proscription for opinion's sake," so much denounced by the very party which now proposes to give it the sanction of law. It was but an effort to sanction and justify in advance, by a vote of Congress, the *proscription* which is soon expected to take place.

Having gone briefly over the avowed system of policy which is to be pursued by the ruling portion of the new administration, we will, in concluding, address your attention to a few other topics of deep interest to the country.

FEDERALISM OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.

We understand federalism to be, the increase of power in the General Government; an encroachment on the reserved rights of the States and of the people; a forced mode of construing the constitution, which draws within its pale ungranted powers. Whether these things be done by Congress or the President, it is federalism—it is, in one word, a leaning towards monarchy. By this rule, the present administration challenges scrutiny; and by this same rule, the coming-in administration is to be judged. We shall not revive the question as to the federalism of General Harrison. Since he has declined the exercise of his own constitutional opinions in arresting the unconstitutional legislation of Congress, the danger of federalism lies chiefly in Congress. The vigilant eye of jealousy is to be kept fixed upon that body for the next four years.

We have already remarked, that, not one of the measures chalked out for consummation by the new administration, is free from constitutional difficulties. We now say, that there is not one of them that does not tend directly to an increase of federal power. The bank—the distribution of land revenue—the tariff—the gag-bill—we ask you to examine them, one by one, with reference to the power which they are calculated to add to the Federal Government, either in its legislative or executive branches. Combine them together, and view them all in operation; and then determine how far our system of government will be removed from a practical monarchy. That the whole Harrison party are united in favor of these measures, we do not pretend; but we lay them down as constituting the system of policy which is maintained by the predominant portion of that party—as the system of measures which receives the approbation of the new cabinet. To our minds, these measures fix conclusively the federal character of the new administration. But it is a good rule "to judge men by the company they keep." During the last war, federalists were abundant, and a great portion of them still live, and are now becoming prominent in the Harrison party. Of that immense host of federalists which embarrassed the administration of Mr. Madison, and threw constant obstacles in the way of the vigorous prosecution of the war, how very few can be found in the democratic ranks—how very many in the Harrison ranks! Our opponents meet this allegation, by designating some few of our friends, whom they charge as having been federalists—such as Wall, Buchanan, and Williams. The two first were the kind of federalists that shouldered their muskets and served their country in the last war. The third, so far as we have learned, was never exposed to the charge, except in having supported the election of John

Quincy Adams. Whilst all three of them, by co-operating many years with the republican party, have given the highest proof of the soundness of their conversion to the democratic faith. But, how stands the account with the Harrison party? Where are all the living members of the Hartford convention, and the prominent opponents of the last war? We answer, in the Harrison ranks! We state further, that, for every one in the democratic party who ever was a federalist, there are at least one hundred who always have been, and still are federalists, on the opposite side. Why are they now active and prominent in the Harrison party? The answer is plain: they believe and expect their own doctrines are to be brought into practice in the new administration. But we will turn next to

THE CABINET.

In reference to General Harrison's cabinet, we should present to you a short biographical sketch of each member, if our limits would allow. This we cannot do; and we regret it the more, because their past political histories, as well as their present political opinions, furnish the most conclusive proof of the federal character of the new administration. If there is any one of them who ever accorded with the people of Tennessee (Mr. Bell alone excepted) in her republican creed, we have wholly misunderstood their past and present positions. With the exception above stated, they were the uniform supporters of John Q. Adams's administration, and as uniform in their opposition to that of General Jackson. To that administration, which obtained power against the will of the people, and pursued a line of policy for which it was indignantly banished from the administration of its affairs, these confidential advisers and counsellors of the new administration were ardently devoted. The political character of Daniel Webster, who is to fill the first office, and stand nearest to the President, deserves a more particular investigation. Of *his* federalism, no friend or enemy has ever expressed one solitary doubt. It has all the marks of *antiquity* and uniformity which the most incredulous could demand. Although not a member of Congress when the last war was declared, yet he came in at the next session, denouncing Mr. Madison's administration as "weak and wicked," and opposing the prosecution of the war at every step. Some of us have examined the journals of Congress during that period, and find that he voted against "a bill for assessing and collecting taxes to sustain the war;" against "a bill to punish *traitors and spies*;" against "a bill to enlist troops during the war;" against "a bill raising five regiments;" against "a bill calling out the militia to execute the laws and repel invasion;" against "a bill providing revenue to maintain public credit;" against "a bill calling on the States for their quotas of militia to defend the frontiers;" against "a bill to provide for the expenses of the war;" and against "a bill to provide for rebuilding the capitol and public offices, which had been burnt by the enemy." In continuation of that same federal spirit which he manifested during the whole of the second war of independence, this same man afterwards declared that he would not vote for an appropriation which General Jackson had recommended, in anticipation of a war with France, even if the enemy should be battering down the walls of the capitol!—a sentiment so unpatriotic, that it extorted from one of his colleagues of the other House the solemn declaration, "that the man who could utter such a sentiment had but to take one more step, and that was—

to join the enemy." We give the substance, and nearly the words, of Mr. Webster and Mr. Adams on that celebrated occasion. Here was federalism in its worst forms—federalism that shocked and astonished even John Quincy Adams himself; and yet this man, with all these records speaking so loudly against him, is now called on to be the *prime minister* and confidential adviser of the new administration! Would Thomas Jefferson—would James Madison, or any other of our republican Presidents—ever have *thought* of making such a selection? No, never; and we warn our countrymen against those coming events whose dark shadows have been cast before them. Mr. Granger is the same man who was run for the Vice Presidency in 1836, and who has been, and still is, generally regarded as an abolitionist. Mr. Badger is understood to have been a uniform and avowed federalist at all times. Of Mr. Bell and Mr. Crittenden, we need say no more than that they are the authors of the notorious modern sedition bills, usually called gag-bills, of which you have so often heard, and to which you have so repeatedly expressed your decided disapprobation.

THE LATE ELECTION.

The late contest for the Presidency was characterized by a degree of excitement which has no parallel in our history, unless it is in the great struggle of 1800. On no other occasion have such exertions been made, and on none have such means been resorted to, as were practised in some portions of the country by those opposed to the democratic candidate. Of the means used by our opponents in our own State, we have nothing to say; they are as well known to you as they can be to us. But we will speak of the violent and disgraceful frauds which have been brought fully to light in some of the large eastern cities. It is no longer a matter doubted, that immense sums of money were freely used in buying votes, and in transporting abandoned outcasts from city to city to give illegal votes. To you, who prize so dearly the high privileges of the elective franchise, it will appear shocking that men can be found abandoned enough to resort to such means, and still more astounding that others should be found base enough to accept the bribes and perpetrate the frauds. Such, however, is the fact—and a deplorable fact it is; and we regret to see that, instead of holding up the guilty wretches to scorn and reprobation, some of that party which had such aid are shielding and protecting them.

The late election was marked by another circumstance, no less to be lamented. We refer to the interference of foreign capitalists, and their stock-jobbing transactions based upon the event of our elections. That a deep anxiety was felt in Great Britain for the success of General Harrison, admits of no doubt. The policy expected to be pursued by his party, in the event of his election, was deemed favorable to British interests. The establishment of a national bank would complete our commercial dependence upon that country. Her capitalists held the bonds of the States for two hundred millions of dollars, which were greatly depreciated in value. The friends of Mr. Van Buren had openly repudiated the idea of assuming those debts by the General Government, whilst some of the leading Harrison journals had openly advocated the assumption. From the election of Mr. Van Buren, no hope could be entertained of their assumption; whilst from that of General Harrison, there was a hope. The powerful incentives of interest, then, would naturally enlist British feeling in favor of the election of

General Harrison ; and the same motives would naturally induce her capitalists to lend their aid, in any way in their power, to effect that object.

That we may not seem to be dealing in mere conjectures, we will call your attention to a few of the evidences furnished by the British newspapers and letters, going to show that British capitalists regarded the election of General Harrison as promising to advance British interests :

The London Morning Post, of the 3d June, 1840, contains this sentiment :

"By the election of General Harrison, the whig candidate, and the rejection of Mr. Van Buren, the return of the Government to a sound and rational system of banking will follow, as a matter of course ; and possibly the United States Bank may once more find itself under the protection of a proper charter."

The Liverpool Standard, of the 4th of September, 1840, held the following language :

"At present, Great Britain exercises a powerful influence over the social, POLITICAL, and fiscal affairs of the United States. The *dependence of the planters in the South*, and the commercial men in the North, *upon the British market*, necessarily superinduces a desire for peace on their part, while it gives this country a large amount of control over the public decisions of those bodies. The ultra republicans of the States do not relish this control. They see that it imposes a barrier against the working out of their democratical principles."

These are the sentiments of Great Britain, as expressed through two of her leading journals. In a letter from Free, Huth, & Co., bankers in England, to John Smith, president of the Bank of Missouri, dated London, June 3, 1840, the following language is held :

"The attention of our capitalists, and others engaged in American affairs, is now turned to your internal politics; and if the prospects of your Presidential election, held out by the last accounts, should be realized, this circumstance will contribute more than any other to restore general confidence."

Other letters, speaking a still stronger and more intelligible language, were received from England during the spring and summer of 1840, and published in some of the journals of this country, the authenticity of which we have never heard disputed down to this time. We have room for but one ; to which we call your special attention. It is dated London, April 1, 1840 ; and is as follows :

"DEAR SIR : You, I know, will be astonished when I inform you that our capitalists are more concerned about the decision of the States in regard to your next President, than *you* are—judging from the tenor of your last letter. The policy pursued by the democratic party of your country, and sustained by the Government at Washington, is alarmingly disadvantageous to the rich capitalists of this country.

"The capitalists—I mean the 'money-lenders'—are also alarmed ; for, as the banking system will be brought almost to a stand-still, there will be no call on them for loans ; and the loss of borrowers will put an end to the streams of wealth which have so long flowed into this country from America, in the shape of interest-money. And this alarms the Government also : for it is the policy of Great Britain, as all men know, to keep America, and indeed all other countries, in debt to her, that she may make them tributary to and dependent on her ; and it is a common boast here, that the United States, though 'free and independent,' are nevertheless as much colonies of Great Britain as ever they were ; and that though they make their own laws, yet that Great Britain has something to say about that business also, because she has such a vast amount of money in the States that she can always have a party in her interest there, strong enough to keep things nearly as she wishes them to be. It was thought, a while ago, that the plan proposed by Messrs. Baring & Co., which received the sanction of the leaders of the whig party of the United States, but was anticipated in your national Senate, by the democratic portion thereof, before it could be brought forward by the whig members as a public measure, would be adopted, and that the American Government would take upon itself the responsibility of paying those debts ; but now there is no hope."

A letter dated at London, July 28, 1840, expresses a strong belief, growing out of a conversation with an American merchant friendly to Harrison, 'that persons in this country [England,] interested in American securities, have already contributed and forwarded to America a large amount of money, to be used in the coming election in aid of the party opposed to President Van Buren ; and that a much larger amount will follow, if it can be used with effect.'"

From these evidences, which are but a small portion of the mass of testimony that might be adduced, we regard it as a fair inference, that British capitalists felt a deep interest in our late elections, and that they were made a stock jobbing transaction in London. Whether their interests induced them to send their gold to this country, or to subscribe a portion of what was already here, to be used in buying votes, and circulating publications in favor of General Harrison's election, is a question about which every man must form his own opinions from the facts which were presented. We all know that immense amounts of money were expended in the election, for various purposes; and if it was all furnished by contributions levied on the citizens of our own country, then it must have been a severe tax.

But it is worthy of particular remark, that, previous to our late election, the celebrated abolition "world's convention" was held in London. In that convention a large amount of money is known to have been raised, to be used in the United States in advancing the abolition cause. That the money was brought to this country, and expended, none will doubt who has witnessed the vast number of abolition newspapers, pamphlets, and documents, issued and circulated, without charge, over a great portion of the United States; and when it is known that, with few exceptions, the abolitionists co-operated with the friends of General Harrison in his election, it is altogether probable that Harrison's party had the benefit of this money in their election. It will be remembered, that on the celebrated central executive committee at Washington, composed of nine members of Congress, the abolitionists were represented by three members—Leverett Saltonstall, Truman Smith, and John C. Clark—all known abolitionists; and that this committee must have expended large sums of money in preparing, and printing, and circulating electioneering documents.

From such facts as we have stated, we feel warranted in the conclusion that foreign capitalists did interfere in our elections. Of the extent of their influence in operating on the election, we give no opinion. It is sufficient for us that such an interference took place; and we bring it to your attention, because we regard it as an assault upon our independence, which ought to arouse every freeman to renewed vigilance in guarding our sacred rights.

In the late election we see nothing to cause the friends of democracy to despair of the republic; but we do see much to excite them to renewed exertions to maintain their cherished principles. The people are essentially democratic, and we have no fears but that the triumph of our opponents will be short and inglorious. Even now, the signs are ominous of their speedy prostration. They have but to develop fully their schemes of federal power, to call forth the united energies of the nation for their expulsion from power.

In a spirit of candor, we may be permitted now to ask you what the country has gained by the election of General Harrison? A party which has long since forfeited the confidence of the people is placed in power. Are there any indications that their power will be used more to your satisfaction than it was during the eight years of the two Adams's administrations? Is there any thing in the character of General Harrison which furnishes a guaranty of better times? Does he possess that wisdom in council, and firmness in action, which will enable him to comprehend the vast interests of this great Government; to devise a new and better system of measures, and carry them into operation? Are his counsellors men in whose devotion to the country, and in whose sound republican principles, you have

such confidence as dispels all apprehensions for the future? Is the system of measures which they propose in accordance with your long-cherished opinions of good government? If there is no cause of danger, why have we seen distinguished southern men, heretofore acting with them, and standing high in their confidence—men whose interests are peculiarly identified with yours—already showing strong signs of disaffection? Do you believe that such men as Wise, Mallory, Garland, and Alford, would so soon have been found betraying uneasiness, if they did not see that there was danger ahead? If these distinguished men of the triumphant party thus manifest their fears, may we not, without prejudging the administration, express our apprehensions, and appeal to you to keep a vigilant eye upon the policy of those coming into power? If we shall be disappointed in our anticipations, and should find that the Government is administered on democratic principles, we should not hesitate to give it our support. In like manner, we doubt not that, if those of you who aided in the election of General Harrison should find him bringing forward and sustaining federal measures, you would withdraw from him your support.

Enough has already transpired to satisfy us that many of you who voted for General Harrison must be disappointed in your expectations. You were induced to believe that the friends of General Harrison would sanction and revive the doctrines of the Jackson party in 1828; but you already see that the whole cabinet, with one exception, is made up of men who opposed those principles, opposed the election of General Jackson, and opposed his whole administration. You were told that General Harrison would abstain from appointing members of Congress to office. You see already that four out of the six members of his cabinet are taken from Congress; and in a short time you will probably see others promoted to high executive offices. You were told that men would not be proscribed from office for opinion's sake by General Harrison. If you could see, in this city, the army of importunate applicants for office, now here, you would have little hope that this promise would be kept. You were told that the election of General Harrison would restore confidence, revive commerce, and produce immediate prosperity. You now see the condition of the country, and what prospect there is for the fulfilment of this promise. We ask that you will look at these things, and not suffer yourselves to rely too confidently on those flattering promises which were made so profusely. Whilst we ask this of you, we are prepared ourselves to judge the administration by its acts, and to award praise or censure as the one or the other may be merited.

In conclusion, we tender to you our grateful thanks for the confidence you have heretofore reposed in us, and assure you that if, on any occasion, we have failed to practise on the true principles of republicanism, it has been an error in our judgments, which none can be more inclined to condemn, than we to deplore.

We are, very respectfully, your obedient servants,

AARON V. BROWN,
CAVE JOHNSON,
HOPKINS L. TURNEY,
JULIUS W. BLACKWELL,
ABRAHAM McCLELLAN,
HARVY M. WATTERSON.

WASHINGTON CITY, *March 1, 1841.*



WERT BOOKBINDING

Jan 1969

Granville, PA

